

D# 21 DOWNLIGHTING

General Description

The Highlands Task Force made this docket item request. The request proposes amending Title IV design guidelines (Districts A, B, C, D, and E) to require downlighting for pedestrian and vehicular movement, unless approved administratively for ornamental pedestrian scale lighting that does not point downward or lighting is specifically allowed in RMC 4-4-075 Lighting, Exterior On-Site (i.e., signage, governmental flags, temporary holiday or decorative lighting, right-of-way-lighting, etc.).

Impact Analysis

Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

The proposed amendment would not affect the rate of growth or development as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

The proposed amendment would not affect the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities.

Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

The proposed amendment would not affect the rate of population and employment growth.

Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

The proposed amendment would meet and fulfill existing Comprehensive Plan objectives. There are several policies within the Community Design Element related to lighting, including consideration of adverse impacts on neighboring less intensive uses, pedestrian oriented lighting, and avoidance of excessive lighting. The proposed changes would minimize potential adverse impacts, such as light glare and spillover onto adjacent properties while maintaining the flexibility for the provision of ornamental lighting sources that do not point downward.

Specific relevant policies include:

Policy CD-54. Development should be designed to consider potential adverse impacts on adjacent, less intensive uses, e.g. lighting, landscaping, and setbacks should all be considered during site design.

Policy CD-123. All exterior lighting should be focused and directed away from adjacent properties and wildlife habitat to prevent spillover or glare.

Staff Comment: The use of downlighting would decrease potential adverse impacts on adjacent uses, as downlighting by definition would be glare-free and shielded from the sky and neighboring properties.

Policy CD-125. Lighting fixtures should be attractively designed to complement the architecture of a development, the site, and adjacent buildings.

Staff Comment: Restricting lighting sources to just downlighting may limit alternative ornamental lighting sources that do not point downward, such as globe, lantern, and acorn luminaires as shown in Attachment A. Flexibility has been provided in the amendment to allow for alternative pedestrian scale lighting that would not point downward. Alternative lighting sources would be approved on an administrative basis.

Effect on general land values or housing costs

The City is not anticipating an effect on general land values or housing costs as a result of the proposed map amendment.

Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

The City is not anticipating capital improvements or expenditures as a result of the proposed amendment.

Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

See the discussion above, under whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable.

Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

The proposed amendment would not affect critical areas and natural resource lands.

Effect on other considerations

Not applicable.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the docket request. The request would minimize adverse impacts related to site-lighting and is consistent with existing Comprehensive Plan policies.

Implementation Requirements

Changes are needed to both the lighting standards within the Design District Guidelines and definitions within Title IV. Specifically:

- 4-3-100 Urban Design Regulations
 - (See Attachment B)
- 4-11-120 Definitions L
 - (See Attachment C)